

the following challenge.

"Your committee feel persuaded that no institution so readily supplies the requirements of those persons who are desirous to turn their leisure hours to the best advantage, and who wish to keep themselves informed of what is passing in the world. To those of the members who, conscious themselves of the benefits to be derived from such an institution, your committee would ask their co-operation, each within the circle of his acquaintance, to endeavour to obtain additional subscriptions - persons who will not only contribute the reasonable amount of subscription - but who will use the Reading Room and Library and thus carry out the object of the promoters." (sic) (24)

During the following July a deputation waited on the Provincial Government requesting a further grant but this was refused. In his annual report of June 28, 1865 the chairman, commenting on this refusal said,

"It is to be regretted that this institution cannot be made entirely self supporting which, at present, is unfortunately the fact, and it is to be hoped the Government will yet see the necessity of assisting in supporting it by means of an annual grant of money, as similar institutions are helped in other colonies, at all events until the public is too firmly convinced of its importance to allow it to languish for want of funds." (25)

Because of the financial position it was found necessary to ask the shareholders if they would forego the interest due to them in August, to which they agreed. In addition to this twenty-one of the shareholders presented their shares to the Institute leaving 178 on issue. Whether or not the completion of the printing of the catalogue made the library more popular is indeed questionable but the number of volumes circulated during the current year rose to 5,376. A year later the number of shares on issue had dropped to 165 but the number of volumes circulated

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24. Minutes of Mechanics' Institute June 30, 1864.

25. *ibid* June 28, 1865. There does not appear to be any reference to the deputation in the proceedings of the Provincial Council and no reason for the refusal is given in the Institute minutes.